

HOTELS: CUSTOMER REVIEWS VALUED MORE THAN THE BRAND



In their most recent study, Expedia Group analyzed the criteria used by tourists when choosing hotels. As a result, customer reviews are among the main criteria for their decision.

Sites for e-commerce, catering, medical and legal services, nothing escapes customer opinions... It is now possible everywhere to submit or consult ratings in order to assess the "quality" of an establishment from a distance. **So much so that 88% of Internet users rely on the comments published on the Internet before finalizing a purchase.** Today in the tourism sector, customer reviews and ratings have become essential in the choice of hotel, for example, almost as much as the price.

To the question, how travelers choose the establishment in which they stay, 72% of them prioritize the brand ratings. While the price remains the number one attribute since it is determined first during a travel project, customers are increasingly choosing a well-rated hotel. However, it seems possible that the customer feedback criterion may overshadow the price factor in the short term since more and more e-consumers are willing to spend more for hotels with more positive feedback and much more than for high-end brands. Third party approval has thus become essential and almost systematic in the validation of a hotel. Similarly, potential hotel guests may be influenced upstream by the transparency of communication about the hotel; they appreciate information on renovation work, pictures of the rooms or the hotel's rating (stars).

Once on site, other criteria contribute to customer satisfaction. A recent study conducted by Cornell University found that **the key factors of customer satisfaction remain service and rooms, in short**, the fundamentals of the hotel industry which can ultimately influence the customer's final opinion.

As a result, it is not necessary to belong to a brand to attract the barge. On the contrary, this study shows that an independent establishment can easily compete with a hotel brand based on its e-reputation and highlighting the customer experience.

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